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Wim Blockmans, Nicolette Mout, eds. *The World of Charles V.* Amsterdam: University of Chicago Press, 2004. vii + 364 pp. $60.00 (paper), ISBN 978-90-6984-420-6.

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It's Your Birthday, Charles V

There is nothing like a 500th anniversary to get scholars thinking about the future of their specialty, and Charles V's birthday is no exception. "What more do we need to know about Charles V after the year 2000?" ask the editors of *The World of Charles V*, a multi-lingual collection of papers originally given at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in October 2000 (p. 1). Under the unifying theme of integration, the authors provide three general directions for the future of Charles V research: interregional financial policy, the structure of political systems, and image-making for public consumption.

The first section of articles, "The Centre of the Empire," covers questions of war and finances. After Mia J. Rodríguez-Salgado's fine contribution covering the motivations behind the first war between the emperor and King Francis I of France, other chapters address matters of military financing and how the emperor worked with his regents and counselors to draw on the resources of one state to assist the whole. For example, James D. Tracy's "War Finance and Fiscal Devolution in Charles V's Realms," introduces the reader to the means by which Charles raised funds from his hereditary lands to use for war in other parts of the empire. Tracy examines Charles' ability to collect special subsidies from the parliamentary bodies in his wealthier territories: Castile, Naples, and the Low Countries. This chapter is strong on its discussion of the amounts of money for each region, but the further conclusions are explored better in Tracy's monograph on the subject, *Emperor Charles V: Impresario of War.*[1]

The chapters in the middle section, "Integration of the Regions," investigate the challenges involved in running a multi-regional empire, and provide a nuanced look at how the various parts of the empire related to each other. Most of the authors of these articles focus on Italy and the Low Countries, and place each local entity within a larger imperial context. This section also includes Péter Sahin-Tóth's intriguing work on the position of Hungary in Charles's anti-Ottoman defense plans. Sahin-Tóth shows the difficulties presented by Ferdinand of Austria becoming king of Hungary after the Hungarian defeat at the Battle of Mohács. He demonstrates the limits of integration in the region by discussing how the Hungarian nobility was divided over the Habsburg reign, and how they eventually had to accommodate the new regime, and vice-versa. Giovanni Muto, Giorgio Chittolini, and Arturo Pacini illustrate similar issues for Naples, Milan and Genoa, respectively, as do Erik Aerts and Aline Goosens for the Low Countries.

The final section, "Constructing the Imperial Image," shows the emperor's attempts to spread an imperial message through art and architecture. Martina Fuchs, Ulrike Becker, and Uta Barbara Ullrich contribute chapters on portraits of Charles and the 1530 entry into Bologna, which show how visual media can communicate an emperor's ideas to his subjects. These chapters, with their attention to image-making and propaganda, are arguably the volume's most historiographically up-to-date.[2] However, Alfredo Alvar's chapter on museum exhibits and commemorations in Spain around the turn of the twenty-first century seems out of place here.

Each individual article in this volume presents a unique look at the reign of Charles V. Each one shows the variety of possibilities for future research. As a whole, however, they do not fully live up to the work's overall title. What, exactly, constituted Charles V's world? One immediately notices the absence of any chapters devoted specifically to regions outside of Europe, and yet Charles V ruled large territories in the Americas. Some attention to Charles' non-European possessions would thus have been more than appropriate. The volume also could have used a more detailed introduction and tighter editing to bring the chapters together. Rather than form a cohesive whole, each chapter is concerned with a separate local context. Furthermore, many articles follow separate

historiographical traditions, and others provide a repetitive historiography. Yet how often does one need to be reminded of structuralism (pp.129-132; 161-164 passim)? Indeed, the historiographical discussions in some articles run counter to the very intent of the book–to look to the future of research on Charles V. Nonetheless, the book is certainly a worthwhile volume, and one can hope that it is a sign of more Charles V research to come.

Notes

[1]. James D. Tracy, *Charles V, Impresario of War: Campaign Strategy, International Finance, and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[2]. Martina Fuchs has also expanded on her paper since the original conference. Martina Fuchs, *Karl V: eine populäre Figur?: zur Rezeption des Kaisers in deutschsprachiger Belletristik* (Mu?nster: Aschendorff, 2002).

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